

# THE QUIVER

Saturday, December 8, 1866.



(Drawn by W. SMALL.)

"You are fond of drawings, Miss Graem."

## "ONLY A CLERK."—II.

BY I. D. FENTON.

AFTER dinner, Mr. Graem went to the library, and Hector and Effie were alone in the drawing-room, where the latter was turning over a portfolio of drawings.

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"You are fond of drawings, Miss Graem," said Hector, sitting down beside her.

"Yes, very. Here are some I did in Italy last year."

"Ah! the dear old château!" and Hector took one in his hand. "How well you've given its character!"

"Do you know it?" said Effie, opening her blue eyes very wide, for it did not seem quite in character that one of her father's clerks should talk of being in Italy.

"Yes, I was there several times with my father." And there was something in the tone of his voice that prevented Effie asking any more questions. She looked down at the pictures, and thought of the Italian song; and Hector, watching the drooping face, saw the tender mouth quiver and the eyelids grow heavy with unshed tears. Nothing is more trying to a man's nerves than watching the gathering tears in eyes that he loves. Hector felt an awful temptation to take her in his arms and kiss away the tears; and being naturally impulsive, and very much in love, there is every probability that it would have ended in his doing so, had not Effie jumped up and gone to the piano, where she presently asked Hector what song he would like. As she expected, he chose the identical ballad which had been the cause of so much self-examination. But Effie was determined to be brave, and sang it from first to last without a quiver in her voice, even saying, as she closed the book—

"You seem very fond of that song, Mr. Fletcher."

What could have possessed Hector? Was it the reproach that he fancied he detected in the few words, the ill-concealed something, like pique, that made him blind to all sort of prudence, and caused him to say, passionately—"Not until you sang it."

Effie's eyes flashed up to his for an instant with such a surprised, joyful, wondering look, that Hector knew how wrong he had been, and was almost thankful when the thick lashes veiled the eyes. And though the fair face was crimson with lovelight, it was in a very stately manner that Effie rose from the piano, and saying she felt too tired to sing again, walked away to the fire; and as Mr. Graem just then made his appearance, no further words were possible. Hector accepted the rebuff he had received, and, strange to say, did not resent it. "She thinks I am 'only a clerk,'" he said to himself as he walked home, "and she is quite right to snub me, if she thinks I go too far;" and then Hector looked up at the stars over head. There was no despondency in the look. He took off his hat, and stood bareheaded as he said—"With the blessing of God, I'll win you yet, Effie, though I am 'only a clerk.'" Then he covered his head again, and walked home, where he found Mrs. Clare sitting up for him.

"I knew you'd be a little late, sir," she said, "for Nancy, Miss Effie's nurse, has been here, and told me as how you was dining with them. Your

coffee is quite ready, sir; shall I take it up?" Mrs. Clare looked very smiling as she talked about the coffee, and it was with an inward chuckle she balanced it upon the hob. She had, she firmly believed, put a stop to "the poor lad's working himself to death," by telling Nancy, who took in hand to let Miss Effie know, from whom it was to reach Mr. Graem. She might have spared herself any anxiety that night. Hector threw the papers he had brought home upon the table, and, sitting down, took his head between his hands, and began to think. Poor fellow, he had better have drank the black coffee and trimmed his reading-lamp. The quiet stars did not send their hopeful counsel into the close, shabby little room, looking meaner than ever, after those he had just left. The fact of being "only a clerk" was stronger upon him within the gaudily-papered four walls; and by the time the church clock struck two, Hector had gone through the "slough of despond," and reached the land of submission, which lies upon the other side. Mentally he had given up the fair hope that broke forth into prayer in the starlight. And while he was sitting there, tearing up the love-roots from his heart, Effie was having the selfsame plant nourished by her foolish old nurse, who had been repeating all that Mrs. Clare had said, adding—"And even though he may be but a clerk, he's a varry personable man; and every ain must hae a beginning: the master himsel' began a clerk."

"Ah, Nancy, dear, but he was a gentleman born. If I knew Mr. Fletcher was that, I wouldn't mind his being poor; but he never speaks of his family, so I am afraid he is ashamed of them."

Chuck, chuck, went Nancy's tongue, as she tossed her yellow curls and put her hands upon her hips, as if she meant to fight Effie, who went on, in a coaxing way—"But do you think he is a gentleman?"

"Was Adam a gentleman?" burst out Nancy. "I've a notion neither James nor Peter were ither than fishermen, and I'm thinkin' it'll be hard for them ye ca' gentlemen to get a better place than the like o' them."

"Oh, but it's different now, Nancy."

"Different the noo!" repeated Nancy, indignantly, "different the noo! Au'm a Caummel mysel', Miss Effie, but au'm no sick a fule as to think au'll get a day suner to heaven for that." And Effie listened, not at all ill-pleased, though she did pretend to scold Nancy for holding such views.

Next day Mr. Graem announced his intention of taking Effie to Scotland with him. As one of the committee appointed to inquire into the affairs of the Western Bank, he required to be in Glasgow that week; and Effie having some school friends in Edinburgh, he thought it would be a nice trip

for his pet. So it happened that Hector did not see Effie again for nearly three weeks, during which the copying was completed, and the office routine pressing sorely again.

Mr. Graem had heard of Mr. Felton's loss and death before, also of the honourable conduct of the son, but this time he seemed never satisfied with the subject, talking to every one, and getting at every one's opinion of the matter.

From Glasgow he went to visit his old friend, Billy Dunbar, and there the subject was renewed. The estate was still unsold, and Mr. Graem very soon let out that part of his reason in coming so far to renew an old friendship was to have a look at the Felton property; and it was while they were walking through the park that Dunbar, seeing how tenderly disposed Graem was towards the owner, told him who his new clerk really was.

"I thought so. I've known it for the last six weeks," said Graem, and he walked on for some distance without speaking, while a glance at his face brought back to his companion's memory the old nickname he had gone by at the High School of "Greetin Graem."

He was Greetin Graem still, and Dunbar knew Hector's fortune was made before he said, "He's a noble fellow, Billy, and it won't be my fault if he is not a great man some day. God bless him! I'll buy this place. And now let us go back. I don't fancy mooning about, glowering at what the poor fellow must often dream of."

When Mr. Graem and Effie got home, the first visit Nancy paid was to her friend, Mrs. Clare, and there, as she was going up-stairs, she met, as she had intended to do, Mr. Fletcher, who, of course, stopped and listened to Nancy's account of her travels, and how she had gone out to see Dunkeld.

"Oh, it's a pretty place, isn't it?" said Hector. "I was shooting there last year."

Not a change in the cunning old nurse's face awakened Hector to a sense of the confession he had made; but it was with a triumphant countenance she came back to Effie.

"I've been at Mrs. Clare's, Miss Effie," she said, "and I've seen him, and I've fund him oot; he's just some gran' gentleman, play-acting like; he let oot that he had been shuttin' wi the great Buccleuch himself; and he's as wae-faced and doon-hearted, as if he was only a common laddie. He speered for you, and gied me this to buy mysel' a cap-ribbon!" and Nancy held up half-a-sovereign.

"Oh! Nancy, how could you take it, and he so poor?"

"That's just why I did, Miss Effie. Poor folk hae as guid hearts as rich folk. If he's rightly poor, he'd hae thoct I wad'na take it for that; it was na the vally o' the money, Miss Effie!"

"I know that, dear Nancy. I—I—didn't mean that. I—I—don't exactly know what I mean."

Nancy patted the little head, saying, "I ken weel what you feel, my bairn. I hae bin the same gate mysel'. I am auld an' ill-fared noo; but there was ain that thoct me bonnie ance."

"Why didn't you marry him, Nancy?"

Nancy shook her head sadly. "He went to the herrin' fishin', Effie, and, like the gude Sir Patrick Spence, he's lying 'fifty fathoms deep' off Aberdeen."

"And you wouldn't marry any one else?"

"I never got the chance, dearie. They said I grat a' my gude looks away, and thoct me dour and feckless, so I left the auld hoose and came to service."

"But you wouldn't have married any one else, dear?" urged Effie, thinking of Hector, and how she meant to be an old maid—because she could never marry a clerk—and how she had arranged all her life with that view.

Nancy knew in her own true heart that no love had come between her and her drowned lover; but it was not her policy just then to say much of lasting truth and love to Effie, who might have to learn that there is a parting as sore as death, when—

"Two are walking apart for ever,  
And wave their hands in a mute farewell."

The day after his return Hector had taken some papers requiring signature into Mr. Graem's private office.

"Will you spare me a few minutes, Mr. Fletcher?" said the master. "I've seen your friend Mr. Dunbar. I was upon the committee of that disastrous Western Bank affair, and then went down to see him. There's a fine property for sale close by his place. The poor fellow who should have had it was ruined by the bank. He gave up everything, behaving nobly—yes, nobly."

Hector's face was deadly pale; but Mr. Graem, who had been pacing the room, was looking out of the window.

"You come from thereabouts; do you know the place?"

"Yes, sir, I do," said Hector, hoarsely.

"Then perhaps you know what has become of young Felton. There's only one wish down there, and that is, to have him back again. I saw Lord Walworth at the meeting, and he was asking everywhere for a trace of him. He has some post under Government ready for his acceptance."

Hector had grown desperate, and when Mr. Graem paused for answer, said—

"I suppose he didn't relish living upon charity, sir, and—and—I think he was quite right."

"So do I, my dear boy," and Graem, facing round, seized Hector by the shoulders. "So do I. Don't be angry that I've found you out. Bless

my heart! would you have me blind, deaf, and dumb? I am a tradesman, but that does not prevent me knowing a gentleman. Now then, come home with me, and we'll talk it over. What! not go? Why not? What's come over you?

"Really, sir——"

"Nonsense; I won't take a 'no.' This time at any rate; I won't take a reason for granted," and so it ended in Hector meeting Effie again, and in Mr. Graem seeing that there was something wrong.

"What have you and Effie been fighting about?" he asked, when they were sitting over their wine, and Hector thought it best to make a clean breast of it.

"I wish you'd spoken to me first, Hector," said Mr. Graem. "To tell you the truth, it's only what I'd planned in my own mind. No, don't shake my hand off, my boy. Effie is a queer lassie; she's got all the pride of my people in that little body of hers."

"May I have her if I win her, sir?" said Hector, standing up.

"Ay, and my blessing; she won't come empty handed, either."

"Oh! sir, you've done enough—more than

enough. The appointment you've secured will keep us."

"You don't know what an extravagant monkey she is; but there, go up-stairs and ——" But before he had finished speaking Hector was out of the room.

Effie was alone when he opened the drawing-room door, and started up with something like fright in her face, for Hector's appearance and manner was decidedly excited and startling.

"Effie! Effie! my own Effie!" said he, and before Effie knew well what had happened she had heard the whole story, and was being kissed, and blessed, and quizzed by her father, who, after all, was too impatient to take his share of the happiness to leave the lovers long together.

The wedding was only delayed until Hector had given in the necessary credentials to enable him to fill the office secured to him by the Home Secretary, and it was the very day before the final ceremony that Graem chose to give his wedding gift. "Effie is worth her weight in gold, Hector," he said, "and I don't mean her to be tocherless. You can take her to your mother's home, my boy; I bought it last week, and it is hers and yours."

## A PARABLE OF LIFE.—I.

BY THE REV. HENRY ALLON.

"And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them."—  
John vi. 17.

**T**HE miracles of our Lord are so wonderful because they are so much more than miracles; they are parables also—lessons of life, as well as works of power; they belong to his teaching equally with his discourses.

Christ never wrought a miracle for the mere display of his power; and when he was asked to do so, he always sternly rebuked those who asked him—mourned over the unspiritual blindness that needed further evidence than that of his character and teaching—that required "signs and wonders ere it would believe."

The spiritual instructiveness of his miracles is their most prominent feature. The feeling of their religious meaning is always greater than the feeling of their supernatural power. We never think of cataloguing them among mere evidences. We sit down to learn from them great spiritual lessons, to draw from them precious spiritual comforts. They speak to our religious souls—in our joys and griefs, amid household cares, and when discharging common duties; in the great crises and struggles of life—when our souls are tossed as by a tempest, when we mourn over friends who need healing, when we stand by the

couch of a dead daughter, the bier of a dead son, the grave of a dead brother.

When the Divine Master can teach best by a parable, he speaks a parable; when by a miracle, he performs a miracle; and if one miracle fail to teach the needful lesson, he works another. When the disciples "do not consider the miracle of the loaves, for their heart is hardened," Christ walks to them upon the water, and rescues them from the lake storm.

We shall not, therefore, profit by Christ's miracles unless we read them with a spiritual eye and a docile heart. "He that is of the truth" understandeth Christ's miracles. They belong to the spiritual man much more than to the unspiritual; they are spiritual nutriment rather than spiritual weapons, teachings and comforts rather than evidences; or, rather, they are evidences as much because of their Divine wisdom and goodness as because of their Divine power.

What a marvellous parable of life we may read in the narrative before us. Christ exposes his disciples to the violence of the storm, permits them to feel how helpless and desolate they are without him, and then wondrously comes to them with comfort and deliverance. The history is a remarkable one, remarkable for its simple incidents, and for its singular beauty; more remark-



able still for its depth of spiritual meaning, its richness in spiritual suggestiveness.

The scene is the little inland sea of Tiberias, the shores of which, next to Jerusalem, are the most sacred spots in the Gospel history. There Jesus made his home, after he was rejected by his fellow-townsmen at Nazareth. During the three years of his ministry, Capernaum was "his own city." In it, and around it his greatest discourses and parables were spoken. In the crowded cities, that made the western shore of the lake the most populous and intelligent district of Palestine, he uttered his chief teachings concerning the kingdom of God. On the smooth sandy strip of beach close by Capernaum, upon which the gentle waves ripple, pellucid as glass, he chose his chief disciples—fishermen of the district; and there, during the forty days after his resurrection, he taught them concerning his kingdom. Upon that little lake, lying like an emerald in a cup of gold, so deeply embosomed in the mountains that surround it, that the climate and the vegetation are tropical, and afford a striking contrast to those of the bracing mountains of Galilee that look down into it, Christ often sailed; and sometimes, as from a pulpit, he spake from some friendly boat to the crowding multitude on the shore, who gathered together "from Galilee, from Decapolis, from Judea, and from beyond Jordan." There, too, he healed their sick, "many coming and going, so that he had not time so much as to eat." That he might secure a little retirement, he had crossed with his disciples to the eastern side of the lake; but the people saw them departing, and "ran afoot out of all cities and outwent them," and passing round the north end of the lake, "came together unto him." Neither he nor his disciples were permitted to enjoy the rest and the quiet intercourse which they sought.

Having taught them through the day, he fed them by a miracle at its close; the effect of which was very disheartening, for it produced in them only carnal desire; and he had to reproach them, that they "sought him, not because of the miracle, but because they did eat of the loaves and were filled." Their excitement found expression in a very unspiritual way. They sought to take the miracle worker "by force, and to make him a king." When Jesus saw this, he at once delivered both his disciples and himself from the grovelling multitude. He bade the people go to their homes; he sent his disciples across the lake to Capernaum; and he himself retired to the top of a mountain, that he might spend the night in prayer; for thus he ever sought relief and strength in disappointed feeling: so entirely alone was he in the high spiritual thoughts and purposes of his mission, and in the great battles that he had to wage. And—who can tell?—perhaps in

this hour of temptation Christ himself felt a need for special prayer! The reason assigned by John is very significant—"When he perceived that they would come and take him by force and make him a king, he departed again into a mountain alone." Was not this a repetition of the third temptation in the wilderness—a suggestion of "the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them," if he would but surrender his cross and his spiritual mission? It was a temptation appealing to a large class of human feelings; and he sought refuge from it in prayer—sought his human power of resistance where he teaches us to seek ours—fled from the temptation of the multitude to the throne of his heavenly Father. And while he is thus on the mountain-top, the disciples are overtaken by the storm.

#### THE STORM.

The first lesson of this great Parable of life is, that *human life has its storms—sudden and severe—which fiercely buffet and greatly imperil us.*

It is not necessary to specify any particular thing. Each individual will think of his own experience—his own great adversity, or temptation, or sorrow, or fear—his storm of outward circumstance, or of inward feeling, in which his little barque seems to be at the mercy of tempestuous forces, and he powerless either to preserve it or to control them. In some form or other storms sweep every man's sea of life: they may rage in the nation, or in the church,—in the quiet lake of the family, or in a man's own individual soul. Our ship of life may be terribly tossed by them—almost destroyed by their fury. Whatever so agitates our life as to destroy our peace, or threaten our safety, is storm enough to make us need the great Storm-ruler.

Let us, then, remember that *storms are no mere accidents of life*—no breaking loose of lawless and destructive forces, through the indifference or the defective control of the God of providence. It was Christ's purpose and pre-arrangement, and for wise and gracious ends, that the disciples were thus exposed.

We know how they felt and yearned after a temporal kingdom; that it was their thought by day, their dream by night; how they hoped to sit on thrones, and disputed which should be greatest.

Had they, therefore, full of such preconceptions and desires, been permitted to remain with the multitude when they sought to make their Master a king, who could answer for their fidelity? who could say that they would not have been carried away with the excitement, and, in very love to their Master, have joined in what they might think a gracious violence to his modest reluctance? so that Jesus would have had to resist their mistaken importunities, as well as the fanatical violence of the people.

It was, therefore, to save them from such folly that our Lord sent them away. And so reluctant were they to go that he had to "constrain them." Probably they thought that the long-looked-for proclamation of their Master as King of the Jews was at hand, and they were naturally unwilling to be away at such a juncture. Hence, although they durst not refuse to take ship, they seem to have lingered by the shore so long as daylight lasted; and it was only when no hope remained of the great event taking place that day, that they stood out across the lake. They might have been at Capernaum when the storm overtook them.

When Christ sends us out into the fierce storm it is for some gracious purpose; to cure some wrong or foolish passion, or to prevent some germinating sin. We know the sins into which we fall; we do not know the sins from which we are mercifully kept. Probably the disciples never knew the evil they had escaped, the great and disgraceful error from which they had been saved; they knew only that they were withdrawn from the rejoicing of their Master's public honour, and thrust out, in the dark night, in a frail boat, and into the midst of a tempest. So it is with many of our trials, we see as little reason for them, and Christ sees as much; we think them so wanton, and Christ means them so mercifully; we feel only the blow, and remain ignorant of its necessity and benefit; we realise only the storm, and do not understand how much better even it is than the pleasant places and the sinful excitements of the wilderness. Only hereafter shall we appreciate the wisdom and love that thrust us out of our rest and joy into dark nights and fierce storms.

*How often the storms of life come suddenly and unexpectedly!*

When the disciples set sail the night was fair and the lake calm. They were doubtless overtaken by one of those sudden lake storms, which like a vulture sweep down from the tops and the gorges of the mountains; and which struck their frail boat as with a blow. But now, they were quietly enjoying the calm, and pleasantly floating upon the water; now, they are struggling as in an agony, straining every nerve to gain the shore, but making no progress, "the wind and the waves being contrary." But an hour or two before, they were peacefully seated on grassy slopes, the brightness of the sky above them, the rejoicing of the multitude around; Nature at perfect rest, the winds sleeping upon the mountains, the surface of the lake unruffled, and mirroring the clouds in its frame of mountain glory; above all, their Master was at their side, in the plenitude and popularity of one of his greatest miracles. In the rich fulness of their blessing they had scarcely an ungratified want. Now, in a frail fishing-boat, their Master absent, no human help near, in the darkness of

the night, and overwhelmed with terror, they are tossing upon the raging sea, which every moment threatens to engulf them.

What a picture of life again, and of its sudden and extreme changes! Who has not experienced how near our greatest joys may be to our greatest sorrows—our wedding feasts to our funerals—our utmost plenitude to our utmost desolation? Are there not always "Sabeans" at hand to sweep away our possessions, and "fire from God" to consume them, and "the whirlwind" to kill our sons and daughters? so that the home which but yesterday was the admiration and envy of a neighbourhood, to-day calls forth its deepest commiseration. Who does not know how suddenly our joy-lights may be quenched, and our windows darkened, and clouds be driven across the clearest sky, and sudden thunderbolts fall, and the worship which, in the morning, was a psalm of thanksgiving be at evening a wail of sorrow?

*Storms may come when we are discharging duties which God has enjoined upon us.*

The disciples were obeying their Master's injunctions—they were put in peril of their lives in taking ship as he had commanded them. So that mere trouble is no indication of God's disapproval of what we do—the loving Master himself raised the storm that so disquieted them. They would have interpreted the storm differently, had their setting sail been an act of disobedience. As it was, they had no reason to regard it as a mark of displeasure.

Is it not the frequent mystery of great sorrows that they come without apparent cause? And yet, would not the ultimate mercy to the disciples have been less had Christ given them a smooth sea, a prosperous gale, and a commonplace voyage across, forgotten as soon as accomplished? The really terrible thing in life is, to encounter storms not in right courses but in wrong ones. More terrible still it is for a man to go on in wrong courses and have no storms—to be permitted to pursue his way of sinful pleasure prosperously and pleasantly.

Whatever mystery there may be in the storms of a pious life, it is much easier to bear them when we are merely ignorant of their reason, than it is to bear storms knowing that they are sent in displeasure. If I know that that which has fallen upon me is the retribution of some great sin, the terrible arrest of some guilty course, why, then, have a great deal more than the storm to bear—I feel God's anger as well as his hand, I am full of remorse as well as of fear. If the storm overtakes me when I am following some path of duty, I may be puzzled about its reason, distressed with its pain and peril, but I have an inward peace. I can turn from the mystery of it to the benignity of him; for this is demonstrated to me by the myriad proofs of a lifelong experience.

## LANDMARKS IN WOMAN'S HISTORY.\*

**T**HE principle which had at last taken firm root in men's minds, it was reserved for Christianity to render practically operative. This principle was established by a conviction that all systems of society up to the present time were radically wrong; by the examples of individual womanly excellence; by the outcries of women themselves against their burdensome constraint, and which, though often repressed, at last gained a hearing. The work of the new religion of mankind was thus one of reconstruction. New duties were imposed, and were enforced upon new grounds. The first grand doctrine laid down by Christianity, was the equality of all, high and low, rich and poor, male and female, in the sight of an all-powerful and all-loving Creator. Wedlock was declared to be a sacred institution, coeval with the soul itself, ordained by God, and indissoluble by man—typical of that holy and invisible bond by which the Church on earth was linked with its great Founder. Polygamy was thus absolutely and unconditionally forbidden. Nor was this all. Men learnt by the new religion, that as the interests of the two sexes were the same, so also their spheres of labour were different. Each had their separate work to do, as well as a common work that could be performed by neither alone. Again, the Saviour of mankind was himself born of a woman; and the sacred thought of a virgin mother spread a sanctity over the whole sex. A woman had been made the visible instrument of the salvation of the world; and the thought might well excite feelings of no ordinary reverence and respect towards women in general. Thus the necessity of omitting nothing which might tend to the elevation of female dignity was at once admitted. How the end was to be gained, what woman's highest mission was, were questions now asked for the first time. Theories of improvement developed themselves into practice. It was soon seen that if the position of women was to be raised, the habitual treatment which they received must be altered. Domestic customs, private manners, must undergo a complete regeneration. Consequently there may be traced to this period the first foundation of certain rules of ceremony and courtesy, to be observed alike in public and in private. Respected by others, woman soon learnt to respect herself. All the better feelings of her nature were aroused. How was she worthily to fill the high place which was now assigned her? The times gave ample opportunity for the performance of all those gentle

offices which seem eminently suited for woman's nature. It was an age of insecurity, confusion, and war. In the midst of their labours and troubles, men turned to the society of woman as to a refuge from the storm. She it was who could utter words of solace to the afflicted, who could cheer in misfortune with her sympathy and love. Time, working together with the healing influences of Christian truth, had, slowly indeed, but surely, at last dispelled the mists by which womanly excellence and dignity had for ages been obscured.

"Christianity," to use the words of a distinguished modern writer, "had given to the world a new object for its devotion in woman." The endeavours to express this devotion were often rude enough, but they were sincere, and the efforts of sincerity and earnestness are in the end successful. Foremost amongst these must be mentioned an institution, whose name is familiar to all, but whose full spirit and scope is intelligible to a very few—chivalry. Only when we look upon the paintings of great artists, or examine the quaint devices of antique tapestry—when we gaze upon the ruined remains of baronial castles, or, looking down the aisle of some dimly-lighted cathedral, witness stone effigies of mail-clad heroes, and tattered remains of once-splendid banners, illuminated by the rays of a dying sun—only at such moments as these can the motive power of chivalry be at all understood. But it was an institution exactly in accordance with the aspirations and minds of men 800 years ago. It was an outlet for the enthusiasm of the times, rich in poetical associations, and affording every opportunity for the display of physical prowess. The aspirants to "this honourable order" bound themselves at their admittance, to observe sundry laws, all of which were more or less connected with the elevation of woman's dignity. They swore eternal allegiance to the laws of gallantry, honour, and religion. Each was required to make choice of one of the most virtuous and beautiful ladies whose acquaintance he could claim, that to her, as to some superior being, he might communicate, not only every action, but every thought. For her sake he was bound to trample down all oppression and sin; she it was who was to be the star and beacon of his path. The mimic spectacle of tournaments and jousts were little more than demonstrations of the strength of womanly influence. Ladies led the combatants to the lists; before the encounter, the knights proclaimed whose slaves they each of them were, and the love which they each regarded as a sure pledge of victory. The

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tournament itself was followed by an entertainment, of which woman was the sole arbiter; conversations were held, especially calculated to afford opportunity for the display of womanly refinement and accomplishments. The main, indeed, almost the only ultimate object of the knight's profession was to win female affection. Military glory was but a means for the attainment of woman's love. From this period may be dated the enjoyment of a free and enlightened intercourse between the two sexes, with definite laws of politeness, gallantry, and etiquette, established upon a firm basis. It is true, that not a few extravagances were then regarded as merely the necessary indications of obedient and respectful love. But these were the natural results of the devotion which was paid by an uncalculating and impulsive age. The unrepressed demonstrativeness of the child ever precedes the discreet reticence of the man. On the other hand chivalry had its faults, and those great ones—faults of grossness, cruelty, and envy; but the times were disturbed by war and stained by bloodshed. The errors, which accompanied the profession of knighthood were merely the consequences of that violence which is inseparable from every revolution. At all transition stages of society, when an old order of thoughts recede before the advance of a new, something of the kind must happen. Though its external demonstrations are relics of the long past, all that was good and noble in the spirit of chivalry still breathes among us. The honour, reverence, and love due to women were the grand principles of its knights; they have been handed down to society, with none of their obligations diminished.

Thus woman was at last fairly launched on her career of progress, and proof was soon given that the views which had been entertained of her high mission and powers were not false. From this time, instances of feminine dignity and virtue begin rapidly to increase. As an age of war gave way to peace, a fresh field was offered for the exercise of all that is beautiful in woman's nature. The husband was thrown more and more into the society of his wife, and the sphere of conjugal duties became enlarged; upon the mother devolved the supervision of her children's education, than which no more powerful influence can be imagined. Something of the same kind has been noticed at ancient Rome, but there the state was paramount. Nearly the same régime was imposed upon all alike, and it mattered little through whom it was administered. Between the improved condition of society and instances of individual feminine merit, there is necessarily a reaction. Just as it was due to a better order of things that these occurred at all, so, too, did they contribute, by the examples which they furnished, to a still

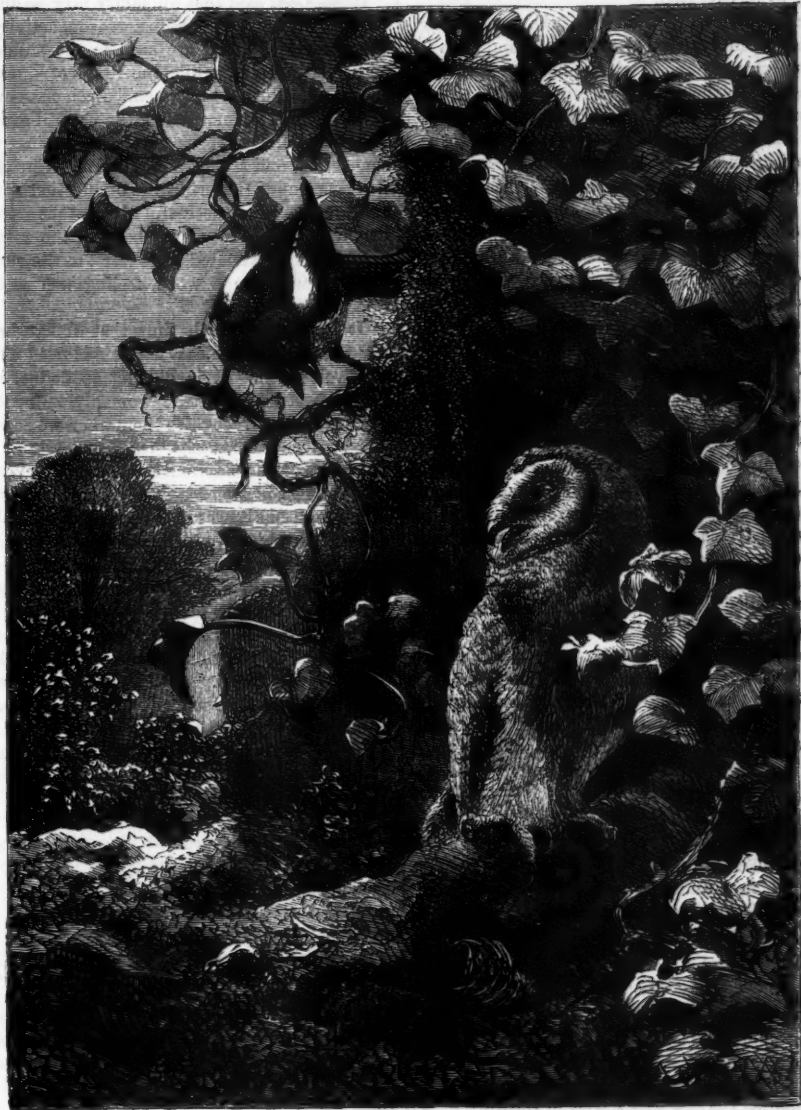
further improvement. When we read in history of an Isabella, who was able to win over a stern husband to her will—whose love of her country and desire for her country's good thought no self-sacrifice too great, it is impossible to doubt that the example which she bequeathed to her whole sex would be without its fruits. Or when we reflect upon the annals of our own Queen Elizabeth, who feared not to defy the denunciations of the Vatican and the booming of the Spanish guns, it seems simply natural to suppose that the mention of her name, and of others such as her, would—insensibly, perhaps—increase the growing feeling of respect for woman's nobleness and strength. This age was, as it were, a period of female probation; and the importance of cases such as these can hardly be exaggerated.

It is about this time that valuable assistance first appears to be lent to woman's cause through the medium of the current literature of the day. The tone in which she is spoken of is no longer depreciatory or light; she is held up to view as capable of performing the noblest acts of self-sacrifice,—as being able to sway by her influence the life and actions of men. Literature is both the exponent and the guide of popular opinion. Great writers, whether in poetry or prose, are little more than types of the natural mind. What others see dimly, they see clearly. Laura and Petrarch, Dante and Beatrice, whose union of memories is not interrupted by the grave, at once show how much the poetic, and consequently the popular, conception of love had become purified and deepened. Again, such lines as these, in the brief poem of Colonel Lovelace—

"Yet this inconstancy is such  
As you, too, shall adore;  
I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
Loved I not honour more"—

appeal to ideas that are new. And here a glance is sufficient to show the wide gulf by which ancient poetry is separated from modern, through the simple fact that female meekness, purity, and worth were beyond the comprehension of the Greek or Roman intellect. They readily recognised the elevating influence of womanly beauty in works of statuary, but not in the living reality. Their sculptors could portray loveliness of body, but their poets never ventured to depict a corresponding loveliness of mind. Such characters as those of Antigone and Alcestis do, indeed, occasionally occur in Greek tragedies; but they are generally hurried off the stage as quickly as the story of the drama will allow, or their noble aspirations are degraded by some unworthy sentiment; while in their very fates a warning is almost invariably contained, as if to deter others from treading in their footsteps. "Give me the making of a people's ballads, and I care not who





(Drawn by J. WOLF.)

"Old friend, it grieves me sore to find thee napping."—p. 136.

makes their laws," says Fletcher of Saltoun. The importance of possessing a high standard of womanly excellence in national literature is hardly to be overated.

Such seems to be a fair view of the more important phases in the history of woman, and such the various circumstances which have at last established her in the present position she holds, both as a mother and a wife. If it be asked what was really the turning-point in her annals; what was the one grand cause from which those causes sprung—all more or less important—that brought about a change so complete, one word will be a sufficient answer—Christianity. As Christianity is the essence of civilisation, so, too, did it elevate, in the eyes of all, the part which woman was destined to perform.

A civilised society consists in the perfect regulation and harmony of its various elements, and of these elements the female is one. Political administration was intelligible to the ancient mind; but what a really healthy state of society meant, neither Roman nor Greek knew. In endeavouring to suppress one section of their population, they could not escape from the trammels of barbarism. Laws and lawgivers, curule chairs and magistrates, cannot ensure a moral tone. In human nature there is much that can be restrained by no legislative authority. These ancient systems failed because they could awake no chord of universal sympathy in those who lived under them. Theories of reformers, visions of philosophers and poets, all failed, till at last the day-star of Christianity arose; and then gradually, but with unerring certainty, the work of the world's regeneration was accomplished. Here was some-

thing which gave mankind other incentives than those supplied by schemes of the religion of intellect, for high and noble deeds.

It has been said that humanity may be analysed into three elements—feeling, reason, activity. Of these, the two latter are seen in the philosopher and "the people," while the first corresponds to the sphere allotted to women. Each class must be duly regarded; if neglected, the natural growth of all is stunted: between each there is an inseparable connection, and a constant reaction. Christianity was based upon the principles of affection and love, and was therefore successful where other creeds had wholly failed. The energy both of the mind and hand was subordinated, as it were, to the workings of the heart. In a word, feeling was no longer rejected or despised.

It is thus, and only thus, that woman has won her present position. What this is need not here be dwelt upon. It is difficult to define, in any precise words, what true womanly influence and dignity are: we recognise them when we see them; but we feel them, rather than understand them. They are both noiseless and imperceptible. Woman's vocation has, in the present day, given rise to much discussion; but it has never been doubted that there are certain objects which, above all others, claim her care. The mother and the wife have duties imposed upon them, which to neglect would amount to an offence that no degree of energy expended in other quarters could atone for; the duties of the family and of the home must first be fully and perfectly performed. As for what remains to be done after these, we need no longer a general, but rather an exceptional and special law.

T. H. S. ESCOTT.

#### THE OWL AND THE MAGPIE.



WEET Daydawn, startled from her sun-  
fired chamber,  
Stole from her flaming doors of red and amber,  
Fled like a shy white dove into the forest.

The owl no more his watchful note repeated,  
But to his ivied tower of oak retreated,  
To ponder o'er the dark night's silent wonders.

Thrush, linnet, blackbird, from their nests up-  
springing,  
Made dance the dewy breezes to their singing,  
And deputed the lark with praise to Heaven.

Meanwhile, a magpie from a distant city  
Flew hither, out of vanity and pity,  
These rustics to astound with human chatter.

He, in his nook, the brooding owl beholding—  
Who then beneath his wing his head was folding—  
Perched on a neighb'ring twig, and preached this

sermon:—

"How now!" 'gan he, his perch so pertly tap-  
ping,

"Old friend, it grieves me sore to find thee  
napping;

Why, what a world 'twould be, were all so drowsy!

"Wake up, friend! 'tis high time to look about ye  
(Not that the world could never do without ye).  
Just for appearance' sake, look smart and stirring.

"Come, let us have a snatch of conversation:  
A lively gossip is sweet occupation;  
Chit-chat displeases some, but that's no matter.

"I have fine tales of sparrow and of pigeon—  
Delicious scandals from a wondrous region.  
But speak, for not a sound have you yet uttered."

Then said the owl unto his reprimander—  
"Fair sir, I have no enemies to slander;  
I'll let you talk for both of us together."

BONAVIA.

## DEEPPDALE VICARAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MARK WARREN."

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

A RAY OF LIGHT.



ARRIVED in town, Frank Chauncey took lodgings, cheap but respectable; and here commenced his career by at once duly qualifying himself to practise as a medical man. Many a time had he dwelt with delight on the period when he should have done this, and so passed the Rubicon. In years gone by, he and his mother had often talked over the matter; and the poor lady had spoken of the occasion as a suitable one for a day of rejoicing. Alas! he had no mother to rejoice with him now.

Perhaps he had rarely felt his desolate position more keenly, than on the evening of the day on which he had taken his diploma. But the darkest hour will often come before the dawn; and so it chanced to be with Frank.

The very next morning, one of those events happened, which threw a ray of light upon his path—a cheering ray, which he had not dared to hope for. The postman brought him a letter from Dr. Plume. Dr. Plume had been a friend of Frank Chauncey's from the moment of his coming to Deepdale. He had appreciated the young man's character, and encouraged, nay, assisted him in his studies. To him Frank had been indebted for many valuable hints, and to him also Frank had confided his ultimate intention of becoming a surgeon.

It was, perhaps, in reference to this circumstance that the doctor, after expressing his regret at Frank's abrupt departure, made the following observation:—"I am an old man, and my practise increases upon me. I find I must look out for an assistant, who I may eventually introduce as my successor. Has my young friend taken his diploma?" It was only a sentence in the letter, and the subject was not alluded to again. But it was a sentence which set Frank thinking. Dr. Plume had the best practice in the neighbourhood. He had made his fortune long ago, and had been talking of retiring for a year or more. To tread in his steps would be a capital opening for Frank. And Frank *had* taken his diploma.

It is true, Dr. Plume might object to him on the score of his inexperience. But then, on the other hand, no one knew better than did the Deepdale practitioner that Frank had thoroughly and carefully studied his subject. Besides, would he not, for some time to come, be acting under the valuable guidance of his employer? Experience was, after all, in this sense, a matter of daily practice. And where could he find a better school?

As for Deepdale itself—and here the pulses began to stir softly in Frank Chauncey's heart—it might be dangerous. It might even be that he had better never venture there again. It might be one of those pre-

sumptuous sins of youth, that meet with their own punishment. But should he not see the Lady Lucy? The very remembrance of her brought a soothing influence to Frank's troubled mind. He loved to dwell on her many and rare virtues—her serenity; her patient endurance of the trials which had fallen to her lot; her deep piety; her steadfast adherence to the path of duty; and, in his fervent admiration, he classed her with that noble band of women to which his dear mother, now in heaven, belonged, and "of whom," thought Frank, "the world is not worthy!"

To entertain the idea of winning Lucy for his wife would seem somewhat a daring one, as matters stood, at present, with the fallen race of the Chaunceys. Frank's birthright—a birthright which would have placed him on a par even with the imperial Lady Landon, had been wrested from him, ere he was conscious of the loss; not by his own misdoing, but by the pernicious ways of Reginald Chauncey: and there had been more Reginalds than one, alas! in the annals of the family.

Then he turned to the epistle of Dr. Plume, and read, and read it yet again. Why should he not take the hint? Why should he not go to Deepdale—that is, if Dr. Plume were minded to receive him? And, above all other thoughts and speculations on the subject, there spoke out one word, clear and distinct, from the depth of the young man's heart—that one sweet word—*Lucy!*

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

AGAIN AT DEEPPDALE.

ERE the post went out, Frank had replied to Dr. Plume's letter. He had, he said, duly qualified himself for practice, and was looking out for a situation. His mother's death, he alluded to, in few words—for he could not trust himself to dwell on a subject so painful. He thought Dr. Plume might guess at his present desolation.

Perhaps the good doctor did; at all events, he wrote a kind and sympathetic epistle to Frank, in which he made clear and definite proposals. He wished Frank to come at once to Deepdale. "I should prefer Chauncey to any one I know," he had said to himself—to himself, for the little doctor lived alone; he had neither wife nor child.

Dr. Plume further proposed, in his letter, that Frank should reside with him in the red brick house, which, in younger and more enterprising days, he had purchased, and in which he had lived ever since.

Frank's joy at receiving this letter was great indeed. He gladly accepted an offer, which seemed to him providential; and immediately set about preparing for his departure.

If there was a single spot on earth after which his soul yearned, it was Deepdale. He arrived there late one evening, when lights were twinkling in the win-

dows of the cottages. The doctor had sent his gig to meet him at the nearest station. He himself was laid up—so said the servant-man—with a sprained ankle, and could not set his foot to the ground. "I am very pleased you are come, sir," added the man; Frank Chauncey was a universal favourite at Deepdale.

Dr. Plume was lying on the sofa in the library, the snugest room in the house, when Frank entered. He held out his hand kindly and cordially. "Well, my dear fellow, I am glad enough to see you. You are come just in time; look at me," and he pointed to his ankle.

"I am very sorry," began Frank.

"Ah, so am I, Mr. Chauncey. I've been sorry ever since, but it has not done it any good. I am getting an old man, I suppose, and a little thing pulls me down."

"You will soon be better, I hope," said Frank, cheerfully.

"I don't know; I fancy not. I seem to have got a shock altogether. However, so much the better that I have found a friend, and some one to help me," added he, looking kindly at Frank. He seemed, from the very first, disposed to treat Frank Chauncey like a son.

A good deal of conversation took place, that night, in the doctor's library. Many topics of interest were discussed, but not one word of the subject nearest to Frank Chauncey's heart was ever alluded to. The Manor was never mentioned. Until just as Frank was retiring to rest, a note was brought in for Dr. Plume. He ran his eye over it, and then handed it to Frank.

"You will have to go, Mr. Chauncey," said he; "it will be a good opportunity for making your debut as a medical man."

Frank had made himself acquainted with the contents of the note in a few seconds. It was written in the large bold hand of the Countess Landon.

Lady Landon will be glad if Dr. Plume will call upon her in the morning; she wishes to see him.

This was all; her ladyship's style was remarkable for its conciseness.

"You must go," continued the doctor; "this ankle of mine will be a tedious business, I am afraid. But her ladyship knows that you were coming back to Deepdale."

"She does!" echoed Frank, hastily.

"Yes; I was there the last time I was out, and slipped down as I came home. Some lad had thrown a piece of orange-peel on the pavement. I went to see that quiet little girl, as unlike the rest of them as can be—Lady Lucy."

Frank's heart gave a great bound.

"She is suffering from a kind of general debility, that has come on quite suddenly—a kind of wasting away; some people would call it a decline."

Frank's heart now died within him.

"The countess has neglected her, that's where it is," continued the doctor; "she always did."

Frank laid the epistle of the countess on the table, without speaking.

"She always did," continued the doctor, confidentially; "you must have noticed that, when you were at the Manor."

"I did," replied Frank.

"Exactly; and she wants more care than any of them; Blanche and Juliana have the constitutions of milkmaids; nothing would hurt them."

"Nothing would," said Frank, abstractedly.

"Ah, if her father had but lived!—but one should not cavil at the arrangements of Providence—if he had! Do you know," added the doctor, abruptly, "I believe that woman is planning to marry her."

Dr. Plume detested the countess from the bottom of his heart.

"Marry her!" repeated Frank, fearfully.

"Yes, marry the Lady Lucy, bless her! I love her as if she were my own child," said the doctor, warmly; "she is worth all the rest of them put together!"

A tingling sensation came into Frank's head. It was as if a peal of bells were ringing in his ears. "Marry the Lady Lucy!" said he, his lips white with the anguish of the idea.

Dr. Plume being very unsentimental by nature, and, moreover, lying in the darkest corner of the room, did not notice the change in the young man's countenance. "Somebody is in the wind. I don't exactly know who. He is a foxhunter, I believe—the most unsuitable person in the world for Lucy." He often called her Lucy, because she was his god-child; and he had attended her from that time to this. "I hear he is paying his addresses to her, poor child. I'll be bound she don't care for him a straw."

"But surely," said Frank, hurriedly, and in a low tone, "the countess will not insist."

"Insist! ay, that she will, if it's in her mind to do so. She has no more feeling than that table—hardly so much."

Frank was silent. The thing was terrible to think of.

"Blanche is going to marry Lord Crutchley—a good riddance too," said the doctor, with some bitterness. "One would think one wedding might have contented them; they might have let my poor little Lucy alone."

Frank's heart was drawn towards Dr. Plume more than it had ever been before. From that moment, he was entirely devoted to him.

"Poor Lucy!" repeated Dr. Plume; "but I am keeping you up, Mr. Frank; it is very thoughtless of me, considering your journey. Good night. I hope you will find everything comfortable."

"Good night, Dr. Plume," replied Frank, abstractedly; and in a state of profound abstraction, he went to bed.

#### CHAPTER XXXV.

##### FRANK'S PATIENT.

EARLY the next morning, in the solitude of his chamber, Frank debated a few knotty points with himself. The gist of the debate was the plan he should adopt with regard to Lucy. "You must learn to see her, to speak to her—in fact, to be on terms of



courtesy and friendship; and you must never allow yourself to reveal by word or look, the state of your affections. You must consider her as out of your reach—nay, as engaged to another. This must you do, Frank Chauncey, if ever you would hold your own at Deepdale." Thus armed at all points, clad, as it were, in a coat of mail, he quitted his room to join Dr. Plume at breakfast.

Dr. Plume was lame and ailing. He had been helped, with considerable difficulty, to the sofa, and there he intended to lie all day.

"My ankle is worse, rather than better," said he.

Frank, having reasoned himself into a state of equanimity, had full leisure to sympathise with the doctor, and discuss the subject of the sprained ankle, as if no weightier matter were pressing on his mind.

When the doctor said, the moment breakfast was over, "Now, my dear fellow, you must be off to the Manor," Frank's self-possession did not fail him. Calmly and deliberately he rose and prepared to go.

He was to have the gig, for a round of visits had to be gone through, and the circle was a tolerably large one.

"If I had not slipped down that Monday," sighed the doctor, "I might have done myself the pleasure of introducing you."

Frank, even when bowling along on his way towards the Manor, had not abated an inch of his stoicism. Taking out his watch, he noted the time with exactitude. So many minutes could he spare for Lady Lucy.

They soon reached the place—the scene of Frank's recent dismissal. He had expected that his former pupil would come bounding out to receive him. But, alas! he had a powerful rival now in Phil's affections—Clara Melrose. Phil was at the widow's cottage.

The gig stopped, and Frank sprang briskly out. "I shall not be more than ten minutes, at the latest," said he to the man who drove; and, still to all appearance light-hearted and free, Frank re-entered Deepdale Manor.

The footman in gold and lace came to meet him, and with solemn state to usher him up-stairs.

"The countess is engaged, sir," said he; "but you can see the Lady Lucy."

Frank's heart gave a great bound, but he silenced it. "She is nothing to you," he repeated; "nothing whatever."

Just at this moment, the door at the end of the corridor—the door, in fact, of Lucy's apartment—opened, and there came out—a young man.

A tide of angry, rebellious blood surged to Frank's cheek. Was he not in all probability the lover—Lucy's lover? The young man passed close by Frank—the corridor was somewhat narrow—and as he passed, he bowed and said, "Good morning."

If Frank *did* make a slight bow in return, it was as much as he could bring himself to do.

Why should he have felt embittered, all in a moment, against the whole world?—why should the current of geniality within him seem as if turned to

wormwood and gall?—why should the fact of this stranger coming from the presence of a lady for whom he was endeavouring to feel the most profound indifference, and in whose society he did not intend to stay more than ten minutes, drive him nearly to distraction? Because he was likewise a lover.

She was standing by the window when he entered, looking out over the garden. Was it to catch the last glimpse of *him*? "Go back, rebellious blood! silence, foolish, unreasonable heart! Lucy can be nothing to *you*, except just simply a patient."

Her face was pale, and her dovelike eyes had a troubled look that went to Frank's heart. She brightened up, however, when she saw him, and came forward, with extended hand, to meet him.

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Chauncey; you must let me congratulate you."

He took her hand, as he had done once before; gave it a slight pressure, and dropped it. Prevent every pulse of his body throbbing with excitement, he could not. He sat in the chair by the window, Lucy on the sofa opposite.

According to the programme, he should have begun with a few medical inquiries,—how was her appetite? how did she sleep? what were the especial symptoms of her disorder? and when he had finished—or rather, when the ten minutes had elapsed—he was to rise, bow respectfully, and, jumping into his gig, drive off. He was to do nothing more, and nothing less. But how was it, then, that Frank on his chair by the window, and Lucy on her sofa, have plunged at once into a conversation in which medicine has no share? He is telling her of the death of his mother. Surely this was not in the programme.

Far later in the course of the visit, he made the following discoveries:—Lucy was pale, and thin, and strengthless. Ever delicate and fragile, she was now like a drooping flower, at whose root a worm lies hidden. She did not sleep; she could not eat. She was languid, and yet consumed by restlessness. What could be the cause? The embryo physician had skill. He at once felt convinced that nothing of a bodily nature was amiss with Lucy. He did not say so; it would have been premature. He prescribed a simple remedy, that as far as medicine was able, would soothe and revive her. Beyond that he could do nothing.

An hour had Frank spent in the apartment of Lady Lucy. Yet he could scarcely believe that he had exceeded the prescribed ten minutes.

As he was hurrying to his gig, the young man he had passed in the corridor was standing at the gate, laughing and talking with the Lady Juliana. Again he bowed courteously, and again Frank was compelled to bow in return.

"Thomas," said he, to the man who drove him, "who is that gentleman?"

"Him as is talking to the Lady Julie?"

"Yes."

"Well, sir, he's staying at the Manor; I can't justly tell his name; but he's the gentleman as is to marry Lady Lucy."

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## THE FIRST LESSON.

"Is Mrs. Melrose at home?" asked Lord Landon, presenting himself at the door, his basket of flowers in his hand.

The spruce, neat damsel who opened the door was no stranger to Deepdale. She had once before lived there in service, and was well acquainted with the family at the Manor. She admitted his lordship with the same respectful air with which she had ushered in his illustrious mother.

One of the things most near and dear to the heart of the countess was that Phil should become a "perfect gentleman." She had taken pains to introduce him to such of her kith and kin as were most likely to polish and improve his manners. Alas! Phil's manners, as well as his scholarship, were decidedly in arrears.

On the present occasion, however, he walked with unwonted steadiness and decorum into the little drawing-room where the widow was seated, and, holding out his hand, said, in a far more gentle tone than usual, "How do you do, Mrs. Melrose?"

The widow rose hastily from her work. A little circumstance occurred to her memory, which, being connected with Phil, caused her at the moment, some slight agitation. As vividly as if it were yesterday, there came back the day when she and her husband had departed from Deepdale. She could see the russet hue of the trees behind the old vicarage; the lingering brightness of the bed of geraniums on the lawn; the wicket gate, at which stood the revered form of her uncle. Then the village street, thronged with those whose hearts had not yet been hardened towards her, but whose voices were lifted up to console and to bless. Last of all, it came into her mind, the wild Irish boy, sitting on a stile hard by, and how he had leaped hurriedly from his seat, and hurried to the carriage window, and clinging there as no other boy could, had said, "God bless you, Mrs. Melrose! be sure you bring your husband back again." Now, alas! she had come back alone, a widow, and desolate!

Thinking thus, as she rose to greet his lordship, the tears came into her eyes. She did not mean it; and she brushed them hastily away, and tried to smile. But that glimpse into the peaceful, well-remembered past had almost overcome her firmness.

"Don't cry, Mrs. Melrose," said Phil; "I am very sorry, but don't cry."

The tone of his voice, so like what it had been then, again partly overpowered her. She could not help it: she sat down and wept.

The Irish boy stood looking at her. Had Dionysius Curling seen him, he would have allowed that the expression of his face had grown more human. Certain it is, that if ever the purest compassion shone forth from any mortal eye, it did from that of Philmore Roderic Patrick Landon.

He said not a word until the little burst of grief

was over. Then he came close up to her, and said, quite gently, "Mamma has sent you some flowers."

She took the nosegay, her lips quivering, and the tears still hanging on her silken lashes. He watched her as she arranged it in a vase, which she took from the cupboard, sitting all the time very still and quiet. When she had done, and was beginning to thank him, he said, "I am sure you are quite welcome. If you like flowers, you can have plenty more. Please don't open the box," for she had it in her hand; "it is a little present from me," and the boy's cheek grew crimson.

She smiled at him as she laid it down. Her smile was wonderfully sweet and captivating, even to the wild lad. He wanted to say something to console her. He thought she was poor, and had lost all her friends; at least, thus much he gathered from the facts stated by Dionysius Curling. But poor Phil was not gifted with much address. Sitting on his stool, he looked earnestly into her face, his piercing black eyes so softened in their expression, that Dionysius would hardly have recognised them as belonging to the savage.

"Mamma wants to be kind to you, Mrs. Melrose, and so do I," said he, simply. "I have been so long—"

He stopped. He was afraid of making her cry again.

She put out her pretty little hand with a caressing gesture. But Phil's ways were not her ways. All his native impulsiveness seemed to rush suddenly upon him. He jumped up, and flinging his arms round her neck, gave her a great sounding kiss. From that very moment he was the open and avowed champion of Clara Melrose.

She had wonderful tact, this woman whom Simon Crosskeys and Nathanael Lewin were preparing to hunt down. It occurred to her, even in this first interview, that something ought to be done in the matter of Phil's education. The countess would brook no delay. If Phil came home without some germ of learning implanted then and there in his wilful brains, she would be dissatisfied. And considering that his lordship was fourteen years of age, it could not be denied that much had to be done; added to which she had opportunity and leisure, as Phil graciously informed her he should not go out rat-catching that day.

She began by telling him in language suited to his capacity that she was poor and in distress. Phil listened to these preliminary observations very attentively. Once only did his eye rest with a gleam of satisfaction on the box that lay upon the table. Then, when she had sufficiently worked upon his feelings, and made him again cry out, "What was there he could do to help her?" she told him, still in simple, forcible terms, that, in fact, he could be the means of saving her from ruin.

Phil, deeply interested—interested as, perhaps, he never was before—attracted by the charm of the widow's manner, and his heart melted at the tale of her distress, inquired with great eagerness what she meant.

Then Clara Melrose told him. Looking down upon him, her sweet eyes fixed on his, she said that if only he would become her pupil—if only he would try to learn—why, then, it would be the greatest boon he could bestow. Lady Landon would then be her warmest friend, and her enemies—she had enemies, she told the lad—her enemies be put to silence.

Phil's eyes glistened with delight. He jumped up again, wild and impetuous. "Learn!" exclaimed he; "I would learn anything for you, Mrs. Melrose."

She smiled upon him, and with her little, graceful hand played with the unmanageable locks that had so affrighted the unhappy Dionysius. The bear's cub was tame enough in the leash of Clara Melrose. What would the terrors of Latin and Greek be, when fulminated from those lips? Would she not make his hours of work as good," Phil thought—"as good as his hours of play? Learn! I should think I will learn!" repeated he, vehemently.

Again she smiled, and then, as if willing to strike while the iron was hot, she reached down a book. She was going to give him his first lesson in Greek:

for nothing but Greek would satisfy the Big Countess. "I can teach the poor lad many things in time," thought she, "but for the present—Greek."

Phil never forgot how, when that lesson was done, and a few letters, nothing more, hammered painfully into his brain, he never forgot how he lay on the floor at Clara Melrose's feet, and she told him the first fairy-tale to which he had ever listened.

Natures such as Phil's, half-savage, half-heroic, are very impressible to romance. The boy's imagination kindled almost like a flash of genius. As he lay, his eyes looking into her eyes, a kind of transformation came over him. His face grew eager, intelligent, susceptible. Dionysius Curling, again we repeat, would barely have recognised it. Except, indeed, when some hours after, and the time had come that Phil must depart, and he had bounded towards the door, suddenly he turned round, and facing the widow, said, abruptly—

"I forgot, Mrs. Melrose—I quite forgot to ask you, have you any rats?"

(To be continued.)

## TIM WHISTLER'S LEGACY.

A STORY FOR THE YOUNG.

**T**WO boys were standing before a bookseller's window, in which were many gaudily-covered story-books. Some of the covers had pictures on them, and these were the chief attraction to the youths. Neither of them were tidily clad, but, for all that, they looked happy, and were certainly merry enough, as they viewed the pictures, some of which were very funny. The boys, Fred Grimes and Tom Painter, had met after an absence of nearly six months, and then quite by accident. Their parents were wretchedly poor—Tom's particularly so: in fact, his father and mother had enough to do to provide him with food, without clothing him also. To a question put by Tom as to what the words on the cover were all about, Fred answered by reading the title-page. It was fun to see Tom's look of astonishment, his widely-opened mouth, shaped somewhat like a badly-formed O, and his no less widely-opened eyes, on hearing his friend read so fluently.

"My stars!" he ejaculated, as soon as his astonishment found vent in words; "my stars, can't you tell all about it! Where did you pick it up?"

Fred told him that, since he last saw him, he had attended a ragged school of an evening. He and another boy were one day playing near the school, when a gentleman spoke to them, and on finding that neither of them had ever attended such a place, invited them to go in with him.

Tom was greatly surprised on learning that there was nothing to pay at the school, and that the boys—some of them, at least—got good places from there. Before parting, Fred and Tom arranged to meet again the following evening when Fred was to in-

troduce Tom to the teacher of his class. Tom lingered near the bookseller's window for some time after his friend had left him. The chief point of attraction for him now was not the pictures, but the words; and he wondered to himself how any one could make them tell anything.

Tom had one friend, Tim Whistler, to whom he opened his mind on the subject. People called him by this name because he was always whistling. He kept a fruit-barrow, and sold fruit to passers-by. Years back, he had been a soldier, and fought in the Peninsular wars, in which he lost his right leg, and now wore a wooden one instead. When in a talkative humour, which was not often, as he was too fond of whistling to talk much, he used to tell Tom about what he had passed through when a soldier. He wound up every yarn by saying, "I allers said that Boney wasn't the man for Wellington."

Tom was an especial favourite with the old man. He often gave him an apple, or a roasted chestnut; and on days when he was in a particularly good humour, he extended the gift to some bread and cheese. On cold winter days, too, he allowed him to warm himself at his fire, which he kept for roasting chestnuts. To Tim Whistler, therefore, Tom opened his mind about the ragged school. He continued his whistling for some time before he said anything. At last he remarked, "Wery well, Tom."

Tim said nothing further for some time, and Tom did not expect to hear anything more from him about the matter. Quite unexpectedly, therefore, Tim said—

"When you can read well enough, I'll give you a sixpence to buy a book. I feel lonesome like

at times, and you can read to me for company's sake."

Tom was delighted. He promised to read all day long, and all night too, if Tim wished him to do so. Already he saw himself installed in his new office as reader to Tim Whistler, and he felt as if he had on a pair of high-heeled boots. Tom was punctual to the minute at the appointed place of meeting. He was not kept waiting long before Fred Grimes came. Together they entered the school. Fred introduced him to his teacher. He was wonderfully attentive. His teacher remarked this, and quite took to him on that account, for the greater part of his pupils were usually very unruly on first joining, and gave him much trouble. Tom became noted as the most regular attendant at the school, and was in great favour with the superintendent, who often spoke kindly and encouragingly to him.

He reported progress to Tim Whistler, and ventured to read to him one day, out of a halfpenny book. Artful Tom! He wanted his sixpence. But Tim was not satisfied with his reading, and didn't offer it him. This only made Tom strive the harder. By diligence and perseverance he at length could read tolerably well. The day arrived when Tim gave him the promised sixpence, telling him to buy a book with it. Tom marched into the school that evening as proudly as if he had won a first prize at Cambridge or Oxford. He produced the money, told how he had earned it, and asked for a book. The superintendent was so pleased with his diligence, that he gave him a very nice large-typed Bible for his sixpence, and his teacher covered it with brown paper for him, to keep the covers clean.

He brought it in triumph to Tim, who stared on seeing such a large book for sixpence. Tom lost no time in fulfilling his promise to read to his old friend. Seating himself on an upturned apple-sieve, he read a portion of the Gospel of St. John. Tim did not cease his whistling as he listened, but, for all that, he was attentive to what was read. Of course there were many interruptions. Customers wanted serving. Some of the passers-by laughed on hearing Tom read; others, again, were pleased, and encouraged him; one gentleman gave him a shilling.

Tom became enrolled in the shoeblack brigade, and took up his position near to Tim's apple-stall; so he spared a few minutes now, and then, to read to him. In time, other idlers, mostly boys, used to loiter near the stall, on purpose to hear him read. This did not offend Tim, not by any means. He said, on first noticing Tom's ragged auditory—

"There's enuf for all on us; and, so long as the pulice don't interfere, it's all right."

Tom contrived to attend the ragged school regularly, and made rapid progress in reading, writing, and arithmetic. He used to give all his earnings to his parents, who, to encourage him, bought him an article of clothing now and then. There was hardly a boy in the shoeblack brigade who earned more money than he did. He kept himself so clean and tidy, was so respectful, and put such a brilliant

polish on people's boots, that he never wanted for custom.

Things went on thus pleasantly for some time. Tom's example, and the readings he gave out of the Bible, induced other boys to attend the same school, which circumstance pleased him much. At length, Tim Whistler was taken ill—seriously ill. He had to lay up in bed, and have the doctor. Tom, with the assistance of Fred Grimes, managed his stall for him, and all Tim's old customers continued to buy there. After giving Fred something for his trouble, he used to take the remainder of the day's earnings to the old man, without keeping a single penny for himself out of them. This mightily pleased Tim. He used to read, also, to him at night, Tim buying the candles. But in about a month's time poor Tim was given up by the doctor. He grew so very thin and weak, that it was plain he could not live much longer. Tom now gave up the stall to Fred Grimes, and did nothing but attend the old man. The day before he died, Tim sent for a lawyer to make his will, much to the surprise of everybody. The lawyer came, however, and the will was made. The very morning he died he spoke very seriously to Tom, and thanked him for the great kindness he had shown him, particularly in reading to him out of the Bible. He also told him that he had left him everything he possessed, and hoped that Tom would go on as he had begun, strive to love God, and trust for salvation through the merits of a loving Saviour. After the old man's death, the will was opened and read. To Tom's astonishment, he found that he was in possession of the sum of two hundred and odd pounds. Tim had always been thrifty; and, what with the profits of his business and the aid of eightpence a day pension, had managed to scrape that amount together. Tom's sudden accession to comparative wealth did not make him proud. He went on as he had begun. He left the shoeblack brigade, however, and kept Tim Whistler's fruit-stall. He prospered so well, that in time he took a shop. He had also the happiness of assisting his parents. Nor did he forget Fred Grimes. In a little time he took him as an assistant in his business. The ragged school was not forgotten, either. Tom became a teacher there, and was noted for his devotedness to the work. My young reader, you have, in all probability, greater opportunities afforded you than Tom Painter had. Do you use them as well as he did his? If so, depend upon it you will, like him, gain something worth having—something, perhaps, far exceeding such a gift as "Tim Whistler's Legacy."

#### ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ACROSTIC ON PAGE 176.

"Shimei."—1 Kings ii. 8—9, 36—46.

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| 1. S c e v a       | Acts xix. 14.     |
| 2. H a n a n i a h | Jer. xxviii. 1—4. |
| 3. I t h a m a r   | Exod. vi. 23.     |
| 4. M e r i b a h   | Exod. xvii. 1—7.  |
| 5. E z r a         | Ezra vii. 6.      |
| 6. I s a a c       | Gen. xxi. 3.      |